

**What is Claimed Is:**

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1. A method comprising:

receiving a data frame on a receive port from a first device connected to a network, said data frame including a source media access control (MAC) address for said first device and a destination MAC address for a second device connected to said network;

forwarding said data frame to a target port corresponding to said second device; and

learning said source MAC address locally to said target port.

2. The method of claim 1, said learning step comprising: determining whether said source MAC address is present in a database local to said target port; and recording said source MAC address in said local database if not present.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising performing frame forwarding using said locally-learned MAC address.

4. The method of claim 2, further comprising aging said MAC address locally.

1           5.    The method of claim 2, further comprising:  
2                bundling a pre-determined number of said MAC  
3 addresses into a reply in response to a report request from a control  
4 point; and  
5                transmitting said reply to said control point.

1           6.    The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
2                compiling a plurality of said replies into an aggregate database;  
3 and  
4                reporting said aggregate database to a network user or  
5 manager.

1           7.    The method claim 5, wherein said report request is  
2 issued at time intervals which are configurable by a network user.

1           8.    A network switch comprising:  
2                a port connected to a network device;  
3                processors and a MAC address database local to said  
4 port;  
5                said processors programmed to perform MAC address  
6 learning locally to said port.

1           9.    A network switch comprising:  
2                a port connected to a network device;  
3                processors and a MAC address database local to said port;



6 media access control (MAC) address for said first device and a  
7 destination MAC address for a second device connected to said  
8 network;

9 forwarding said data frame to a target port corresponding  
10 to said second device; and

11 learning said source MAC address locally to said target  
12 port.

1 15. The computer-usable medium of claim 14, said learning  
2 step comprising:

3 determining whether said source MAC address is present  
4 in a database local to said target port; and

5 recording said source MAC address in said local  
6 database if not present.

1 16. The computer-usable medium of claim 14, said method  
2 further comprising performing frame forwarding using said locally-  
3 learned MAC address.

1 17. The computer-usable medium of claim 14, said method  
2 further comprising aging said MAC address locally.

1 18. The computer-usable medium of claim 14, said method  
2 further comprising:

3 bundling a pre-determined number of said MAC  
 4 addresses into a reply in response to a report request from a control  
 5 point; and  
 6 transmitting said reply to said control point.

1 19. The computer-usable medium of claim 18, said method  
 2 further comprising:

3 compiling a plurality of said replies into an aggregate  
 4 database; and  
 5 reporting said aggregate database to a network user or  
 6 manager.

1 20. The computer-usable medium of claim 18, wherein said  
 2 report request is issued at time intervals which are configurable by a  
 3 network user.